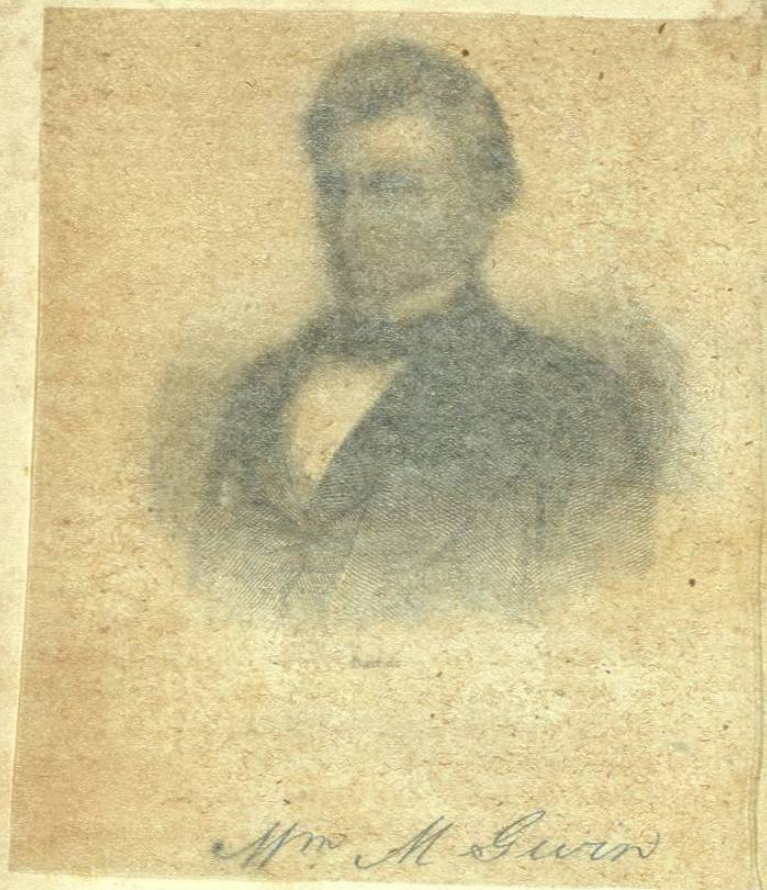


## CHAPTER XI.

ARRIVAL OF THE LEXINGTON.—THE MARCH TO LOS ANGELES, AND BATTLE OF SAN GABRIEL.—THE CAPITULATION.—MILITARY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CALIFORNIANS.—BARRICADES DOWN.

THURSDAY, JAN. 28. Our harbor has been enlivened to-day by the arrival of the U. S. ship Lexington, commanded by Lieut. Theodorus Bailey, an officer that might well have been promoted years ago. Capt. Tompkins and his company of one hundred and forty men, and field train of artillery, are on board. She brings out also Capt. Halleck, U. S. Engineer, who is intrusted with the erection of fortifications at this place and San Francisco. The Lexington is laden with heavy battery guns, mortars, shot, shells, muskets, pistols, swords, fixed ammunition, and several hundred barrels of powder. She has also a quantity of shovels, spades, ploughs, pickaxes, saws, hammers, forges, and all the necessary utensils for building fortifications of the first class; and what is better still, she brings with her a saw-mill and a good grist-mill.

FRIDAY, JAN. 29. The U. S. ship Dale, W. W. McKean commander, sailed to-day for Panama. She takes the mail which is to cross the isthmus, and reach the United States by the West India steamers. As soon as her destination was known, a hundred pens





were at work, transferring to paper affections, fond remembrances, kind wishes, and a thousand tender, anxious inquiries. How absence melts the heart! The cold is kindled, the indifferent clothed with interest, antipathies melt away, and endearments revive with undying power. I love the very stones over which my truant footsteps ran, and could kiss the birch rod that chastised my youthful follies. What language, then, can portray the love which clings to one who throws sunlight through the shadows of this dark world, or paint the cherished hope that buds into being with—

MY INFANT BOY.

I have not seen thy face, my child;  
They say each look and line,  
Which o'er thy father's aspect plays,  
Is miniatur'd in thine.

They tell me that thy infant voice—  
Its wildly warbled tone,  
Seems to thy mother's listening ear  
The echo of my own.

I know it not, but fondly deem  
That such a thing may be,  
And trust thy father's better hopes  
May long survive in thee.

I have not seen thy face, my child,  
Though weary moons have set  
Since mine and thy glad mother's eyes  
In tender transport met :—

For ere thy being dawn'd to light,  
Or knew what life might mean,  
Our ship had earth's mid circuit swept,  
And oceans rolled between.

I waft thee back a father's kiss—  
A pledge of that wild joy,  
Which o'er his yearning heart will rush,  
To clasp his infant boy.

SATURDAY, JAN. 30. The long-looked for intelligence has come at last in an authentic shape. The American forces, commanded by Com. Stockton, aided by Gen. Kearny, broke camp at San Diego on the 29th ult., and took up the line of march for Los Angeles. Their route lay through a rugged country of one hundred and forty miles, drenched with the winter rains, and bristling with the lances of the enemy. Through this the commodore led our seamen and marines, sharing himself, with the general at his side, all the hardships of the common sailor. The stern engagements with the enemy derive their heroic features from the contrast existing in the condition of the two. The Californians were well mounted, are the most expert horsemen in the world, and whirled their flying-artillery to the most commanding positions. Our troops were on foot, mired to the ankle, and with no resource except in their own indomitable resolution and courage. Their exploits may be lost in the shadow of the clouds which roll up from the plains of Mexico, but they are realities here, which impress themselves with a force which



reaches the very foundations of social order. The march of the American forces from San Diego to the Pueblo below, and their engagements with the enemy, are vividly described in a letter to me from one of the officers attached to the expedition. This writer says :

"Com. Stockton, at the head of a force amounting to about six hundred men, including a detachment of the 1st regiment of U. S. dragoons, under Gen. Kearny, left San Diego on the morning of the 29th of December, for Los Angeles. Our line of march lay through a rough and mountainous country of nearly one hundred and fifty miles, with impediments on every side, and constant apprehensions of an attack from the enemy: our progress was nevertheless rapid; and though performed mostly by sailor troops, would have done credit to the best disciplined army.

"On the morning of the 8th of January, we found ourselves, after several days' hard marching and fatigue, in the vicinity of the river San Gabriel; on the north side of which the enemy had fortified themselves to the number of five hundred mounted men, with four pieces of artillery, under Gen. Flores, and in a position so commanding, that it seemed impossible to gain any point by which our troops could be protected from their galling fire. They presented their forces in three divisions—one on our right, another on our left, and a third in front, with the artillery. On reaching the south side of the river, the commodore dismounted, forded the stream, and commanded the troops to pass over, which they did promptly under the brisk fire of the enemy's artillery. He ordered the artillery not to unlimber till the opposite bank should be gained; as soon as this was effected, he ordered a charge directly in the teeth of the enemy's guns, which soon resulted in the possession of the commanding position they had just occupied. The first gun fired was aimed by the commodore before the charge was made up the hill; this overthrew the enemy's gun, which had just poured forth its thunder in our midst. Having gained this important position, a brisk cannonading was kept up for

some time. We encamped on the spot for the night. The next day we met the enemy again on the plains of the Mesa, near the city. They made a bold and resolute stand; tried our lines on every side; and manœuvred their artillery with much skill. But the firm and steady courage with which our troops continued to defend themselves, repelled their attempts at a general charge, and we found ourselves again victorious. We encamped again near the battleground, and on the morning of the tenth marched into the city, while the adjacent hills were glistening with the lances of the enemy."

SUNDAY, JAN. 31. It is sweet in a land of tumult and strife to see the Sabbath sun come up. Its sacred light melts over the rough aspects of war like melting dew down the frontlet of the crouched lion. May the spirit of devotion, in its ascending flight, bear into a serener element the aspirations of the human heart! There let faith, and hope, and immortal love build their tabernacle. It shall be a dwelling for the soul when the palaces, temples, and towers of earth are in ruins. Over its gem-inwoven roof shall stream the light of stars that never set; flowers that cannot die shall wreath its colonnade, and hang in fragrant festoons from its walls; while the voices of streamlets, as they flash over their golden sands, shall pour unceasing music on the wandering air.

MONDAY, FEB. 1. The forces under Col. Fremont were within a few leagues of the town of the Angels when Com. Stockton entered it. Their approach cut off the retreat of the Californians to the north. The forces of the commodore were on foot, and of course



unable to follow up their brilliant successes. The enemy were mounted, and might have held the country around. If attacked, they had only to retreat, and return again on the retiring footsteps of their foes. But at this critical juncture, Col. Fremont, with his battalion, came down upon them, leaving them no alternative but to capitulate or attempt a disastrous flight into Mexico. They wisely, with the exception of a few, determined to abide the conditions of a treaty. The terms of capitulation are couched in a spirit of great liberality and justice. One would hardly think that men so amiable and confiding in their terms of peace, could have just been on the eve of taking each others lives. But this is one of those exhibitions of forbearance and generosity which not unfrequently relieve the calamities of war.

The articles of capitulation, in substance, were, that the Californians shall surrender their arms to Col. Fremont, return peaceably to their homes, and not resume hostilities during the continuance of the war with Mexico;—that they shall be guaranteed the protection of life and property, and equal rights and privileges with the citizens of the United States. These terms were duly subscribed by the commissioners appointed by the parties to the compact, and ratified by Col. Fremont. They were liberal in their spirit, wise in their purpose, and just in their application. More rigorous terms would have involved a sense of humiliation in one party, without any advan-

tage to the other. The Californians were defeated, but not crushed. They have those salient energies which rebound from misfortune, as their native forests sweep back into the face of heaven, when the tempest has passed. They never took the field out of reverence for the Mexican flag: it was a wild impulse, deriving its life from a love of adventure, and the excitements of the camp. They had had their tragedy, acted their part, and were now willing the dim curtain should drop; and Col. Fremont very wisely clenched it to the stage. A few in the orchestra still piped; but the actors were away, the side-scenes vacant, and the spectators at their homes; and there may they remain, till the sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook, and the art of war be known no more.

THURSDAY, FEB. 4. The Californians who left Monterey to join the outbreak at the south are now returning to their homes. Every day brings back two or three to their firesides. They look like men who have been out on a hunt, and returned with very little game. Still, it must be confessed that they have materially strengthened their claims to military skill and courage. They have been defeated, it is true, but it has cost their victors many sanguinary struggles, and many valuable lives. They have raised themselves above that contemptuous estimation in which they were erroneously held by many, and se-



cured a degree of respect, which will contribute to mutual forbearance. This result is to be ascribed to the prowess of the few, rather than the conduct of the many. The mass were governed by impulse and the pressure of circumstances. It was not that calm, heroic spirit which disregards personal safety, and exults in the hour of peril; nor was it that deep sense of patriotic duty which makes a man firm in disaster and death. It was rather that recklessness which springs from wounded pride, but which often crowns with laurels a forlorn hope.

FRIDAY, FEB. 5. The outbreak at the north has passed away, and the last wave of commotion perished with it. This result is to be ascribed to the energy of Capt. Mervin, to the moderation and firmness of Capt. Marston and his associates, and to the good conduct of the forces under their command. Nor should it be forgotten that the Californians evinced, on this occasion, a disposition well suited to bring about an amicable treaty. They took up arms, not to make war on the American flag, but in vindication of their rights as citizens of California, and in defence of their property. They had been promised protection—they had been assured that they should not be molested, if they remained quietly at their homes—and these pledges had been glaringly violated. Their horses and cattle had been taken from them, under cover of public exigency, and no receipts given, to secure them indemnification, till at last they deter-

mined to have their rights respected, or to die like men. Still, it was necessary to meet them in arms, and in sufficient force to inspire respect. They were, however, well mounted, and might, had they so listed, have prolonged the struggle. But this was not their object, and they sent in a flag of truce. The conditions of the treaty were, that they should lay down their arms, release their prisoners, and that their property should be restored, or such vouchers given as would enable them ultimately to recover its value. This was a reasonable requirement on their part, and the American officers had the good sense to appreciate its force. We must be just before we attempt to be brave. Laurels won through wrong are a dishonor.

SATURDAY, FEB. 6. We have another rain; not a cloud is to be seen; but the whole atmosphere is filled with a thick mist, which dissolves in a soft perpetual shower. It seems as if nature had relinquished every other occupation, and given herself up to this moist business. She calls up no thunder, throws out no lightning; she only squeezes her great sponge, and that as quietly as a mermaid smooths her dripping locks.

SUNDAY, FEB. 7. Com. Shubrick has ordered the barricades removed. Thank God! we are at last relieved of martial law. It is one of the greatest calamities that can fall on a civilized nation. It tram-



ples on private rights, trifles with responsibility, and cuts the conscience adrift from its moorings. Men are thrown into this eddy of excess, and then act like rudderless ships in a tempest-tost sea. Years will elapse before the moral sentiments which have been unhinged by military violence can be restored. Even California, where revolutions come and go like the shadows of passing clouds, will long show the traces of the one which has now passed over her. Its lightning has shivered the tree before the fruit was ripe, and blasted a thousand buds that might have bloomed into fragrant beauty.

MONDAY, FEB. 8. Much to the relief of the citizens, Com. Shubrick has given orders that the volunteers on service here shall be paid off and discharged. They are principally sea-beachers and mountaineers, and some of them are very good men; but others seem to have no idea of the proprietorship of property. They help themselves to it as canvas-back ducks the grass that grows in the Potomac, or migratory birds the berries which bloom in the forests through which they wander. They hardly left fowls enough here on which to keep Christmas. Could dismembered hens lay eggs, they would have more chickens in their stomachs than they ever had dollars in their pockets.

## CHAPTER XII.

RETURN OF T. O. LARKIN.—THE TALL PARTNER IN THE CALIFORNIAN.—MEXICAN OFFICERS.—THE CYANE.—WAR MEMENTOES.—DRAMA OF ADAM AND EVE.—CARNIVAL.—BIRTH-DAY OF WASHINGTON.—A CALIFORNIA CAPTAIN.—APPLICATION FOR A DIVORCE.—ARRIVAL OF THE COLUMBUS.

TUESDAY, FEB. 9. The U. S. ship Cyane, S. F. Dupont commander, is just in from San Diego. She was dispatched to bring up General Kearny and suit, and our consul, T. O. Larkin, Esq. The arrival of the Independence was not known at San Diego when the Cyane sailed. The return of Mr. Larkin was warmly greeted by our citizens. Even the old Californians left their corridors to welcome him back. He was captured by those engaged in the outbreak some three months since, and has been closely guarded as a prisoner of war. Still, in the irregularities of the campaign, and the easy fidelity of those who kept watch, he has had many opportunities of effecting his escape, but declined them all. He was on the eve, at one time, of being taken to Mexico, and got ready for the long and wearisome journey; but some of his captors relented, and he was allowed to remain at the town of the Angels, when the success of the American arms relieved him. He experienced during his captivity many acts of kindness. Even the ladies, who in California are always on the side of those who suffer, sent him many gifts, which contributed essen-